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Subject: The Religious Uses of Music.

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PREACHED BY

HENRY WARD BEECHER.



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THE RELIGIOUS USES OF MUSIC.

“Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”—Eph. v. 19.

Among the themes of gratulation in our times, is the great development of music. Every kind—secular and religious, vocal and instrumental—has had a vast progress within the memory of this generation. In our childhood there was very little music except singing—and that was not ecstatic. The reaction of the Puritans against music had well-nigh extinguished it, until the present generation. The first efforts to introduce music into New England by the pitch-pipe were regarded by the more anxious and cautious, who are ever alert to watch the devil, as the very finger of Satan himself; and soon after, when bass viols and flutes began to be employed as auxiliaries to the choir they were resisted in regular battle; and when the organ advanced, there were not a few who felt that the church had backslidden, and might about as well go straight over to Popery.

We have lived to see, in almost all the religious assemblies, these unwise solitudes alleviated; and there is a growing intelligence in respect to the use of music. There is also a growing disposition to allow religion to employ any instruments by which it can accomplish its divine purpose. Religion is not a poor, scrawny prisoner, tied up in a church and forbidden to go out into the broad sunlight, obliged to sing watery hymns and psalms, and not allowed to touch noble instruments. Religion is God's own child, and walks a queen in the earth, and has a right to everything by which men can be made happier while they are being made better.

The singing in our churches fifty years ago was simply doleful; and instruction in music was then a rare accomplishment, and was for the children of the rich, if for any. Musical instruments were few. It is rare, now, to find a household in comfortable circumstances without a musical instrument. It was rare

then to find one even in the house of the rich man. I suspect that my father's house saw the first piano which was introduced into the goodly old town of Litchfield. It was a wonder and a marvel. But our children are bred to music now as a part of the public instruction. A great impulse has been given to church music. A native musical literature has been created. It is not very elevated, it must be confessed; but it is good enough for seed. It is the beginning of a glorious future. Schools are full of music, and streets and houses resonant with it. Choirs and choral societies in the country and in the city are increasing in number and in efficiency.

We owe something, I think, of this reviving of music to the humble Methodists—to what were called “wild revivalists.” Those who conducted revivals followed the impulses of men closely, they studied human nature; and these revivals were the truest schools of preaching, and also of singing. Although we were accustomed, formerly, to speak slightly of Methodist hymns and tunes, and to ridicule revival melodies, yet the poorest tune or hymn that ever was sung is better than no tune and no hymn. It is better to sing than to be dumb, however poor the singing may be. Any tune or hymn which excites or gives expression to true devout feeling is worthy of use; and no music which comes to us from any quarter can afford to scorn those simple melodies which taught our fathers to weep and give thanks in prayer-meetings and revival meetings. We owe much to the habit of the Methodist Church, which introduced popular singing throughout our land, and first and chiefly through the West, and little by little everywhere.

We ought to remember, also, such venerable names as Mason and Hastings, who were early the missionaries of this good cause. They introduced, and they carefully nourished, the early developments of music. We owe most, however, for the condition which we are in with regard to music, at the present day, to foreign immigrants—above all, to the Germans, who, if they have brought here some rationalism, and much more lager beer, have also brought a great musical enthusiasm with them—and I regard that as more than an offset for both of the others. To them we owe a debt which we shall not soon pay. Nor have we yet received at their hands half of that which they are prepared to give to our people in these later stages and in this fuller development of scientific music. We must, I think, admit that we are pupils of our ancestral blood. The old Saxon blood is teaching us to sing as it has taught us many other things which are well worth knowing.

I do not propose to consider music at large: I propose simply to consider some of its religious uses.

The Jews, more than any people, employed music for sacred purposes. It was not unknown to the collateral people of the oriental nations which were cotemporaneous with the Jews; but it was not employed among them to any such degree as it was among the Jews. The Jews were preëminently a choral people; and as the early church was almost wholly Jewish—that is, as the dominating characteristic was Jewish—the habit of song, as well as many other habits, passed over into the early church, and it was a singing church. By song it consoled itself in sorrows; it instructed itself; it ministered to its own patience; it created joy where otherwise there could have been none. All the way down through the early centuries there were exhortations to song like that of the apostle in our text, where he is teaching men how to maintain their faith under adverse circumstances.

“Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”

In the early church the hymn was the creed. It was at a later day, when music began to wane, that creeds took on philosophical forms, and men exchanged psalmody for the catechism. In the Catholic Church music was made to occupy an eminent position; but like everything else in that church it was made hierarchic. In the Roman Church there was almost no democratic element of administration. The Methodist Church is a remarkable combination of hierarchic government united to democratic worship. In the government of the church among our Methodist brethren, for the most part, the clergy act; but in the conduct of public worship the whole people have liberty of tongue—and they use it. But in the old Roman Church the whole worship, as well as the whole government, was in the hands of the hierarchy. The music was therefore official, and was the music of the church, and not the music of the community, nor of the common people. One of the most important elements of the Reformation in Germany was not merely the liberty of thinking, but the liberty of singing. As the Roman Church had sung for the people, just as it had prayed for them and preached to them, they being recipients, and the hierarchic body being the only responsible men who were at liberty to confer gifts upon the people, so reaction against this hierarchic administrative body took on the form, earlier than almost any other, of singing. The right of the people to sing may not have been technically disputed; but the feeling of right and the impulse to sing arose, I think, almost wholly, from the reactionary spirit. It was so in Germany. It was so in France. Indeed at one period it would seem as though the French were likely to outstrip the Ger-

mans in the reformation. At Court, during certain periods, the psalms of David might be heard sung by the courtiers; and penitential psalms were sung to waltzes and other secular music. For a long time this continued; and if there had arisen a genius who could have been to that nation what Watts and Wesley and Doddridge have been as hymn-writers to the English people, it is probable that the Reformation would have gone on in France as it went on in England. Not insignificant authorities have declared that the success of the German Reformation depended more upon the fact that the great mass of the common people were taught to sing, and that there was furnished them an immense natural literature of hymns, than upon any other thing. This, perhaps, is an over-estimation of the matter; but without a doubt that element had a large influence in bringing the common people up and giving them a power by which they were sustained and defended against hierarchic oppression.

The meaning of religious music ought to be considered. It is that which is designed to produce, not pleasure, nor admiration, nor even education in the matter of refinement. Religious music, as distinguished from other music, is that which shall excite or express some inflection of the highest feelings. Music may be employed to express thoughts. It may even be employed to recite history. Creeds themselves may be chanted—the most abstract of all teaching. Historical narratives may be chanted. But in our use ordinary music is designed either to promote or to express what may be called *the moral and spiritual feelings*.

There is a great difference in music itself; and yet almost any music can be so used as to express religious feeling. There are many tunes that we sing, which to the ear of a German carry associations most irreligious, but which to us are religious enough, because we have not heard them sung in drinking saloons or other low places. We use for sacred purposes alone tunes that in other lands are not used exclusively for purposes that seem reverent. And we ought not needlessly to introduce into our religious music tunes which are worldly. Though one may properly take portions of oratorios and symphonies and make of them tunes for hymns and sacred songs, yet there is much in all secular music which had better be left out from religious music. There is much music which is not redeemed from associations of gayety, not to say vanity, and which does not seem likely to be redeemed, and which is not needful, because there is already in existence, and there is multiplying in every decade of years, music which is full of the expression of a true religious feeling.

When, therefore, we hear introduced needlessly into religious service the music of the world, we have a right to be offended. We have a right to say, "We did not come to church for the sake of having our memories of the theater or of the opera revived. We did not come to have the imagination of the dance awakened in our minds." When such music is needed, we should go where it may properly be found, in the household. We have a right in the church to ask for such music as shall promote thoughtfulness, tenderness, devoutness, cheerfulness, aspiration, joy in praise, and hope.

Not only the character of the music, but also the method of rendering it, is concerned in making it devout or religious. Organ-music is the noblest music, I think, on earth. The organ is the noblest instrument that has been created; and like all things which were meant for time, it has required centuries to construct it. It has grown (nor is it yet fully grown) in majesty, in scope, in power, in eminent sobriety, and yet, in accompanying vivacity and brilliance. It is, above all other instruments, adapted to the uses of religion. The church is fortunate in having, peculiar to itself, the noblest of instruments, which may be said to be the combination of all other instruments that have ever been created. Still, the organ itself may become an idol, or it may lead to idolatry. It may stand in the house of God a mere echo of the world outside. Instead of leading us through dreamy meditations, or through the more profound emotions, toward veneration; instead of lifting us up from the earth, and bearing us through mysterious distances into the very presence of God, how often is it made the basest slave to titillate the ear, and carry us back again out of the clouds, or down from the top of the mountain to the bottom, where the people are, and where demons abuse the people! In the house of God we have a right to demand that the organ shall serve—not taste, but religion.

Nor shall I be withheld from saying that for the twenty-five years during which I have been the pastor, and the only pastor that this church has ever had, I have counted it to be one of the most fortunate things in attempting to indoctrinate this people, and to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord musically, that we have had the service of the organ administered by one* who, to my knowledge, has never once, in any single instance, deviated, for the sake of pleasing the taste of men, from the strictest expression of sobriety, of depth, of power, of joy, of hope, of reli-

* Mr. John Zundel.

gious feeling. And though this organ has sometimes gone after worldly joys, it has never done so under the hands of him who sits at it now. It has been consecrated to the service of religious sentiment.

It is not the character of the music presented which always determines its religiousness. The nature and object of instrumental performance and singing in the house of God is the excitement or expression of religious feeling. That alone should limit and determine the character of the music which is employed. There is much music which is good and proper, but not expedient to introduce into the house of God. There is much good music which can only be rendered to the taste. Much music is so mingled with what may be called *musical gymnastics*, that it inevitably will excite curiosity and admiration, rather than thoughtfulness and emotion.

I should shock even the least venerating in my presence if, standing here, I should employ my prayers, the devotions of the church, as an elocutionary exhibition. I should do violence to your feelings if, addressing God, I were to begin with the scale of vowel sounds and explode them all the way from the lowest to the highest, in the midst of my prayer. You would be shocked if in the most devout passages of my prayer I should go through these sounds on the rising scale and on the descending scale, observing the various inflections and reflections, giving all the tones—the sweetest ones and the harshest ones. You could not help being shocked if I should make an elocutionary drill of prayer, using the name of God as a pivot on which to trill or explode the sounds. Nobody could tolerate such an outrage of propriety as this would be.

But why is that any worse than to do the same thing in singing, with our hymns, most of which are prayers? Why is that any worse than in singing, to see how rapidly one can run up or down, or to see how high or low in the scale one can go? Why is it any worse than for one to show how exquisitely and artistically he can utter the highest notes. There is a great deal of the gymnastics of music that is proper in some places, which would not be proper in a church; as there is a great deal in calisthenics that would be proper in a hall devoted to physical training, which would not be proper here on this platform. That place has one object, while this place has another. And I affirm that any use of music, in regard to sacred things, which makes it merely a physical accomplishment, and which addresses it to wonder and curiosity and admiration, is a desecration of the Sabbath, of the sanctuary, and of sacred music itself. As an in-

variable rule, on all occasions of purely religious service, music is to accomplish some religious end. And no matter how consummate it is, now matter how exquisite it is in taste, if it fails to promote religious feeling, it fails to meet the end for which it was instituted.

No matter how finely sermons may be written, no matter how exquisite they may be as regards choice of language, no matter how beautiful and apt may be their illustrations, if they be sermons that buzz in the ear, and tickle the fancy, and go no further, they are wasted, and they are out of place in the house of God. Preaching in the house of God is to seek some religious end. That religious end may be large; it may take in the whole range of faculties; but it must be an end that leads to devotion.

Any choir that ceases to excite devotion has overstepped the limits of propriety. The distinction between worldly and sacred music is marked and clear. One is designed to excite pleasure through a ministration of taste: the other is designed to incite or express devotion through a ministration of religious feeling. Church music belongs to the sphere of religion. The highest music for religious purposes is not vocal and instrumental music pure and simple, but music which is wedded to psalms or hymns. When a religious thought or sentiment is rendered by music, you then have that which in a religious point of view is far higher than either the music alone or the thought of sentiment alone. To read a hymn, or to sing a tune, is not so effective as to unite the two and sing the hymn.

Let us consider some of the advantages in a religious education which grow out of the use of music in connection with hymns and psalms.

In the first place I hold that there is more sound instruction to be given to a congregation by this method than by almost any other. Indeed, I doubt, if you were to analyze your religious emotions, whether you would not trace them back to hymns more than to the Bible itself. If any one will consider the source of his thoughts of heaven, I think he will land in Dr. Watts, rather than in the Revelator, Saint John. I think that the hymns of Dr. Watts, and Charles Wesley's hymns, in which they describe heaven, its occupations, its glowing joys, and its zeal and rapture, have more to do with forming men's ideas of the promised land than any other literature, not excepting the Bible. Just as John Milton has given us more theology of one sort than can be found in the Bible.

The hymn book is the system of theology which has been most

in vogue among the common people. If you compare, point by point, the teaching of hymns or creeds or catechisms, I think you will join with me in saying that it is a pity that there has not been more singing. I do not say but that the catechisms may have a place; but the instruction which is given by hymns is more like the instruction which is given by the Word of God than is the catechism. The Word of God seldom analyzes; it seldom runs into abstractions; it seldom presents truth in a philosophic view; it almost invariably appeals through the imagination to the feelings, and through the feelings to the reason. The form of presenting truth by hymns is the highest form of presenting it—truth as it is in the heart, and not truth as it is in the head.

In this way the truth is made easy to all comprehensions. We follow nature. We find that children learn most readily by fables and stories rather than by reasoning. We find that children are seldom metaphysicians. More often they are poets. Children learn more by pictures which are presented to their minds than by exact statements of ideas. And the Word of God is seldom an uninteresting book to children if it is properly laid before them.

No preaching was ever so profitable to me, over whose head went thundering sermons, which were magnificent, no doubt, which were impetuous, but lifted high above my capacity to understand, as were portions of the Bible which were read to me in a manner which rendered them attractive to me. At church I looked up and saw that there were great goings on in my father's pulpit, when I was six and seven and eight years old; but what it was all about I did not know. When, however, my dear old aunt read to me the ten plagues, the history of Joseph, and Ruth's inimitable history, or when she read to me from the Gospel scenes in the life of Christ, nothing could have been plainer to me than these scenes and these histories. The Bible, thus administered to me, was my sanctuary.

So, that instruction which is derived from psalms and hymns is according to the Bible method, because it addresses itself through the imagination to the emotions, and through the emotions to the understanding. And it is better fitted for the inculcation of popular theology than sermons themselves.

It is on this account that I think hymns and psalms will be among the great influences which will bring together the church of the future, and make substantial harmony between those who never could be reconciled by their confessions and by their catechism. It is remarkable to see how men will quarrel over a dogma, and then sit down and rejoice over a hymn which expresses

precisely the same sentiments about which they have differed. A man will dispute with you in regard to the absolute divinity of Jesus Christ, but he will sing "Coronation" with you because he carries out his own idea as he goes along. In general feeling you are united, though in special dogmatic statement you disagree.

There have been many vehement controversies between the Calvinists and the Arminians. There have been a great many disputes as to whether men can fall from grace or not after they have once been effectually called and converted. They all do *sin*, we know. The Arminians say that they fall, and the Calvinists say that they do not. It is a difference of statement in regard to a *fact* which seems to me to be without any doubt. But whatever may be the disputes concerning this recondite matter, on the one hand the Methodists will sing Calvinistic songs with us, and on the other hand we will sing Arminian hymns with them. Without hesitation we sing with each other hymns, quite unaware of what the doctrines are which are laid up in them. We sing from the same hymn-book things about which we should widely differ if we were discussing systems of theology. "The theology of the feelings," as it has been aptly termed, the theology of the heart, brings men together. You can blend men by common experiences which touch common feelings; but you cannot unite men by philosophical statements or historical facts. One of the bonds of union to-day is the hymn-book and tune-book of the congregation, which contains dogmas representing every conceivable variation of belief, which brings men together, harmonizing them and cementing them, and inspiring in them the feeling that they are brethren, and that alike they are children of the Father God.

So too, it seems to me, that hymns and psalms render a valuable service, in that they remove those special hindrances and difficulties which obstruct the entrance of the truth into men's hearts. There is much truth which is clearly presented, but which, being presented in a doctrinal form, or argumentatively, excite in the hearer a disposition to argue and dispute.

There stands a controversial dog at almost every turn; and when you approach men on the subject of theology, this watch-dog shows his teeth. Men call it "conscience"; but a dog is a dog. Where a man is combative, he denies your propositions, and fights them. And much that is true never finds an entrance into men's minds because of the malign feelings which are in them. But there is that in music which has the power of putting these malign elements to sleep. We are told, you know, in the fable, that old Cerberus went to sleep charmed by music. However that

may be, sweet hymns do allay malign feelings; and men who are rude and combative may be harmonized under their influence.

I remember a remarkable instance which occurred in my father's lecture-room during one of those sweet scenes which preceded the separation of the Presbyterian Church into the Old and New Schools. At that time controversy ran high, and there were fire and zeal and wrath mingled with discussion; and whoever sat in the chair, the devil presided. On the occasion to which I refer, an old Scotchman, six feet high, much bent with age, with blue eyes, large features, very pale and white all over his face, and bald-headed, walked up and down the back part of the room; and as the dispute grew furious, he (and only he could have done it) would stop and call out, "Mr. Mandera-a-tor, let us sing 'Salva-a-tion';" and some would strike up and sing the tune, and the men who were in angry debate were cut short; but one by one they joined in, and before they had sung the hymn through they were all calm and quiet. When they resumed the controversy it was on a much lower key. So this good old man walked up and down, and threw a hymn into the quarrel every few moments, and kept the religious antagonists from absolute explosion and fighting. It is the nature of hymns to quell irascible feeling. I do not think that a man who was mad could sing six verses through without regaining his temper before he got to the end. You cannot have antagonistic feelings together. If a child is angry, the nurse tries to make him laugh; and he won't, he strives against it, because when the laugh comes, away goes the temper. Our feelings are set like a board on a pivot; and if this end is temper and that end is good-humor, when the temper goes up the good-humor goes down, or when the good-humor goes up the temper goes down. So it is in respect to all the feelings; they exist in opposite pairs; and the way to put down a bad feeling is to find out the feeling which is opposite to it, and stimulate that. This is in accordance with the law of the mind. And the singing of sweet hymns and tunes will go further to cast the devil out of men's minds than any other exorcism which I know of.

The use of hymns, in singing, also, may be spoken of as preëminently beneficial to individuals in times of sorrow and distress. I know of nothing that, on the whole, is more soothing to the thoughts and feelings of one who is in trouble, than the thinking of a song, if he cannot sing it; but if he can sing, it is all the better. The sweet sounds which men utter, seem to rise, and then descend again in dew and rain from the hand of God upon them, to cool and quiet them. I am sorry for any one who cannot

sing. I am sorry for anything in nature which cannot make music. I know not that the toad ever sings. Beetles do not sing. Worms do not make any musical noise. When we come up to the cricket and the whole cicada tribe, one sings in monotone, and another breaks into syllabic music—the katy-did, for instance—and their songs are limited in scope and low in quality. But when you rise above them to the region of the birds, music takes on more beautiful forms. And I know not what the summer would be worth without its birds. From their first coming in the spring I bless God, and find it easier to be devout and to aspire. After mid-August, when the nest has served its purpose, and the birds have prepared themselves for their southern flight, I cannot repress melancholy and sadness that there is no music in the trees or in the forest. If they do not sing for themselves, I think they might afford to sing for me.

If you rise still higher, out of the tribe of uninstructed animals into the human race, you find superior musical gifts and endowments. There the sense of music takes possession of the understanding, and of the whole realm of taste, and of the heart itself. And the tongue by which men evolve the highest thoughts and feelings, is the tongue of music.

Men often ask, "How shall I restrain wandering thoughts in prayer? How shall I pray?" Do you suppose that praying means kneeling down? Do you suppose that praying means uttering just so many sentences before God? Do you not suppose, when you say,

**"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,"**

that that is prayer? If you cannot kneel down and pray, did you ever try to stand up and pray, singing? Two-thirds of all our hymns are prayers; and if you find it difficult to pray, why do you not sing? There are many men who cannot lead the devotions of their household; but can you not sing? Cannot your wife sing? Cannot your children sing? I care not whether you can do it according to the canons of the most refined taste; can you do it so that it shall be tolerable? If you cannot lead in prayer, take two or three devout, prayer-inspiring hymns, and sing them. Then you will have had devotion more profitable than if you had repeated petitions which you inherited from your father, or copied from your deacon or elder of the church.

As a preparation, then, for religious meetings, sing. As a preparation for the sanctuary and its privileges, sing. As a prep-

aration for self-examination, or as a means of pushing in the worldly stops, and drawing out the religious stops of the organ, sing. And let the children sing. Joining in the singing of hymns is eminently profitable.

The singing of hymns also carries with it great relief to care. There is many a woman, I think, whose life, passed in the household, is filled with fears and anxieties, and oftentimes with troubles which her pride never suffers her to express except toward God. I believe that there is many and many a woman who endures uninterrupted trials, who is shut up to herself, and yet is growing in richness and strength and inward beauty, being sustained through all her dreary pilgrimage by the power of Christian hymns. She sings, and the hymns that she sings are such as reach over almost every conceivable condition of the mind or heart. The very wine of experience has been pressed out, and hymns have been found to contain it. So the griefs which come and go in a day can be easily soothed; and the sorrows and cares which will not go can be made tolerable, by the sweet aid of song. Joys can be excited out of sadness. Patience can be inspired out of discouragement. The sweetest and richest experiences can be attained through the voice of music. Men can oftentimes find in song, joys which the sanctuary itself fails to give them.

Such being the power of music, it seems to me that it ought to occupy a much more important place in the realm of instruction. There are those who ask, "What shall make the Sabbath-day more acceptable? What shall save the Sabbath-day?" If you ever save the Sabbath-day you must make it attractive. You will never drive this great American people into Sunday as into a net. You will never drive men into the Sabbath-day as into a prison-house. If it opens its cavernous doors, and invites men only to a condition of restraint and formal obedience, they will not enter it. And every American church that would redeem the Sabbath-day must do it not by holding up texts badly construed or misreasoned upon. You must make the Sabbath-day the sweetest day of the week. Then no argument will be needed to induce men to accept it. If you are not willing to do that, then you should shut your mouth evermore on the subject of the desecration of the Sabbath. In every household it is the duty of father and mother to extort from their children, in after years, the testimony, that of all the days of the week there was none that they liked so well as Sunday. Of all the days of the week there was none that I liked so little as Sunday, when I was a boy. Of all the days of the week now, there is none on which I work so much as on Sunday. And if to work on Sunday is to

break the Sabbath, then I am one of the greatest of Sabbath breakers, for I work about all day, and sometimes all night. But, after all, it is the joy-day of the whole week to me. And if you would redeem the Sabbath, make it more cheerful in the household. Give it the exhilaration of song. Give it the social element which goes with psalms and hymns. If you do not make the sanctuary on the Sabbath-day a place of joy and not gloom, you cannot express the spirit of such a people as ours: but if you inspire the sanctuary with a noble life of manhood, and with high conceptions that touch the whole range of faculties; if the reason, if the taste, if the moral faculties, if the deeper springs of the soul, are touched, and the mysteries of the world to come are sounded out, and men are thoroughly roused, and more thoroughly held, then no house will be large enough for the congregation that will be eager to participate in the services of religion. For under such circumstances religion has the power to make men men's sorrows lighter, their joys brighter, and their hopes more rapturous.

The grand trouble with our Sundays is, that they are stuffed. They are not filled with living food. They are like dead fowls, all of them dead and stuffed. But men run after life. They long for vitality. Restriction is the accident of religion, and not its nature. Development is its characteristic. And real noble music is one of the instrumentalities by which we may redeem the sanctuary and the Sabbath, very largely from danger of neglect.

It is a matter of inquiry whether we are going to get the Germans to respect our American Sabbath. I do not want them to respect our American Sabbath. I want them to respect *the Lord's Day*. But you cannot get them to respect the Lord's Day unless they are made to believe that there is such a thing as the Lord's Day. How can you expect them to worship when they do not feel certain that there is a God? How can you expect men who are unbound, loose in their religion, to observe your Sabbath-day, which is but an external institution? The way to make men respect religion is to lead them to respect manhood in themselves first. It is to wake up among them religious impulses. The services of our Methodist brethren are doing a better work among the Germans than our polished services are.

When religion is made attractive; when it is made, by singing and other instrumentalities, to appeal to men's best feelings; when it makes the sanctuary a place where men are so happy that they would rather part with their daily bread than with the bread of the Lord which they obtain there, then there will be no difficulty in getting men to observe the Sabbath-day. Make it better than any

other day, and then men will observe it of their own accord. But you cannot dry it, desiccate it, make it a relic of the past, and then get men to bow down to it and respect it. Make it a loving day, a heart-jumping day, a free-thinking day, a day of inspiration and of hope, and then you will redeem it.

Not only is music destined to have much to do with individual experience, with the comfort and joy of the household, and with church worship, but I am not without hope that it will have an important influence in promoting international peace. And if you had stood with me, last week, in that great tumultuous assembly in Boston, in that building which is four or five hundred feet long, and three or four hundred feet wide, where there were twenty thousand musical performers and thirty or forty thousand hearers, I think you would have had the same feeling. For, when the English Grenadier Band marched from the midst of the choir and came down into their places, they were greeted with thunders of enthusiasm. And as they began to play their national airs and ours together, an almost fanatical wildness was exhibited by the people. And there were thrice a thousand men who would fain have rushed up and thrown their arms about them—and I know of one man who would have led. The feeling grew in depth and sincerity. It was my pleasure to stand near the colonel of the regiment, who came out with this band, and who has the general conduct of affairs with them; and I said to him, "If you have any influence with the Cabinet or the Government, or the Department that manages such things, send a message by cable to England, and tell them that nothing will contribute so directly, at present, to the kindly feeling of these two nations toward each other, as for the Queen to give orders that this band shall go to our principal cities, and perform some of their principal pieces. We will give them an ovation. The land will blaze with enthusiasm toward them. Old England will have a better opinion of us, and we shall have kinder feelings toward old England. We? Other folks, for I have kind enough feelings toward her already."

And this was not peculiar to the representatives of England; for the next day, when the German band came out, it was thought to be admirable beyond all description. Each band, each day, was thought to be the best. There was nothing to compare with the Tuesday band of England; there was nothing like the Wednesday band of Germany; and there was nothing comparable to the French band of Thursday. Each, as it came out, carried the whole enormous crowd of thousands and thousands of the people out of all sense of propriety, and, even in decorous old New England, they

stood upon the seats, and the men swung their hats; and the women—who had nothing else to swing but their bonnets, which could not be seen—swung their handkerchiefs. The wildest enthusiasm prevailed, and having been in and of the crowd, I am witness to this glorious international comity, this genuine interchange of cordial sympathy and kindness.

Brethren, these great international exhibitions of mechanical art, and these contests between nations in music, are a great deal better than international combats. We have seen what we could do with the rifle and with artillery; now let us see what we can do with the reaping-machine and the trombone. We have seen what we can do with engines of destruction: now let us see what we can do by competition in skill.

One thing which leads me to sympathize with the combined movements of workingmen, though I do not approve of their measures, is the tendency which these movements have in the direction of peace. We shall never put down war so long as the power of war is in the top of society. Not until working people have their say, can you destroy the cannon and the rifle. And anything which brings the common people into relations of kindness and friendship will have the effect to hasten on the day of prediction, when there shall be no more war and destruction.

Though I smiled at the notion of a grand peace jubilee before I went to Boston, when I came away from there, I said, "Whatever effect may be produced by this thing here, I am satisfied that it is in the power of music to have an international influence." And the time will come when, by pictures, by music, by mechanic arts, and by industrious affiliations, all nations shall be under one brotherhood, so that it will be impossible for ambition to rend them asunder, or lead man to destroy man.

Let us, then, pray for the days of song. Sing, man; sing, woman. Or, if you cannot sing, make a joyful noise to the Lord. Sing in your house. Sing by the wayside. Sing upon the sea. Sing in the wilderness. Sing always and everywhere. Pray by singing. Recite truths by chanting songs. Sing more in the sanctuary. All of you sing. Sing from city to city, from state to state, and from nation to nation. Let your songs be like deep answering to deep, until that day shall come when the heaven and the earth shall join together, and the grand and final chorus shall roll through the universe; when "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We rejoice, our Father, that there are so many who sing thy praise eternally. We rejoice that there is a world whose language is music, and where joy is unceasing, and seeks expression in song. We are glad to believe that thou art such a one that none can draw near to thee without ecstatic happiness; and that every lip must needs break forth in its gladness, in its sense of what thou art, and in its feeble attempt to utter those things which shall be praise and adoration. How few there are in life who excite in us other than compassion, or affection in low degrees! To how few can we look up! We are of the earth, earthy. Thou only art pure and perfect. Thou only canst be approached by praise without its easily running into flattery. And we rejoice that yet one day we shall behold thee, and be filled with gladness at thy excellence; yea, and be drawn, by thine excellence and goodness, toward thy likeness; and be brought into accord with thee, and made beautiful, as thou, in the beauty of holiness, art transcendently lovely.

We pray that on earth we may be prepared for thy service in that land of liberty where we shall no longer be bound and hindered; where we shall no longer be uncertain; where we shall see thee as thou art, and be satisfied.

Behold, we beseech of thee, those who bear burdens. Teach them, under all their burdens, to have a cheerful trust in God. Behold those who are in darkness, and have no light. May they have that faith which sees the invisible, and which interprets the meaning of hidden things around about them.

Look upon those who are tempted, and are as if vehemently attacked by adversaries, and are scarcely able to defend themselves. We pray that they may have strength from God, and be clothed with the whole panoply of the Gospel, so that they shall be able to stand even in the hour of direst assault.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon those who are bearing the burden and the heat of the day, being called to the transaction of the secular affairs of life. As their day is, so may their strength be also. May their hearts not succumb to the temptations of life. May they bear up, and become ministers of peace. May Christ be known by their fidelity and integrity.

We pray that thou wilt grant that the number of those who seek to become men in Christ Jesus may be multiplied. We pray that they may seek each other, and find each other out. May those in all nations who are children of God know each other. May those walls of partition which have honestly but ignorantly been built up by men's hands, at last be broken down and taken out of the way. And we pray that men may love each other, even as God loves them. We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that we may be more concerned to destroy the common enemy than to tear each other to pieces.

Grant that wickedness may cease to have such fascination and power in all the earth. May there be more light, more knowledge, and more divine inspiration to make knowledge effectual. We pray for the cleansing of the hearts of men, and for the renewing of their will. We pray that they may be born again into the new and spiritual life, that they may behold the heaven above them, and that they may know what it means. We pray that thou wilt clothe thy people with such patience and steadfastness that men, beholding their strength and experience, shall be drawn into the great faith and love of Jesus Christ which hath inspired them.

We beseech of thee, that thou wilt look upon all those who need, in especial, our sympathy. If there be those who are kept away from us by sickness, be with them in that sickness, and alleviate their pain. And if they are walking the last steps upon the appointed path, and are drawing near to the

other life, may they begin to discern the tokens thereof. May they behold the bright shining of the gate and the battlements, and hear the notes of that song in which they soon shall join.

If there be those who are withheld from us by the sickness of others, be thou in their hearts to-day, and make the room of duty the sanctuary of God to them.

We pray for those who are separated from us, having gone about every whither, upon the sea and upon the land. We commend them all to thy holy care and keeping.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt be very near to any who are in bereavement, and whose sorrows will not let them rest. Oh! thou that didst calm the troubled sea, and sweep, by thy word, the storm out of the heaven, thou also canst comfort those who are in the deepest affliction. In the bosom of thy love may they find that peace which the world cannot give them.

Bless, to-day, everywhere, all those who preach the word of God. May they be armed with fidelity and intelligence. May it not be a vain labor which they shall perform. Grant that thy word may everywhere be spread abroad. May it address itself to the consciences and understandings of men everywhere. May men learn truth, and purity, and fidelity, and love, and justice, and aspiration. We pray that the knowledge of God as he shines in the face of Christ Jesus may be borne all around the world, and that those great and glorious predictions may not linger, which promise that the whole earth shall be the kingdom of the Saviour. O Lord God, the signs are already rising in the horizon. Be pleased, we beseech of thee, to press forward thy work.

Remember any who are in foreign lands to-day, any who are in the wilderness, any who are in the midst of the dark-minded peoples of the earth, seeking to lead them into nobler paths. Comfort their hearts. Strengthen their hands evermore. And though they lay foundations which others shall build upon, though they sow seeds whose harvests others shall reap, may they be content to labor anywhere. May they be willing to do the hard work, so that others may have ease in their labor; and may they look for their reward in the kingdom of glory.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all governments and upon all rulers. Wilt thou bless the President of these United States, and those who are joined with him in authority. Bless, we beseech of thee, the governors of the several States, the legislatures, the courts, and all officers and magistrates throughout our broad domain. We pray that they may be men who shall fear God; and that they may be men who shall do righteously. Grant, we pray thee, that the day may speedily come when no one shall need to say to his neighbor, Know ye the Lord, but when all shall know him, from the greatest to the least. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech thee to bless us in the truth which we have considered. Prepare us by righteousness upon earth for the ministration of sacred song, and for all its cleansing, inspiring, comforting, and instructing influences. Bless, we beseech of thee, the efforts which are made for its

extension. Bless its schools and its teachers, and all the little voices which are lisping music in their first days. Grant that no child who learns to sing among us may fail to be in the choir above where we hope to sing. Bless the great gathering which is assembled in a neighboring city. May the hand of God, which has preserved it from accident or harm, still be over it. And may those things which men have faintly or fondly hoped would be accomplished be more and more abundantly fulfilled than they have expected.

Spread abroad, we pray thee, the spirit of song which grows into friendship and gladness of heart, and which unites men to the heart of God. Wilt thou fill the whole earth with the joy of thy salvation. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*

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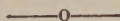
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